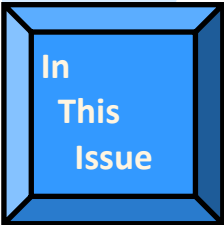




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Newsletter—January 2023



In
 This
 Issue

Pastor's Pen 1

Calendar 2

Birthdays 3

Anniversaries

Prayer Ministry 4

Bible Reading Plan

Next Steps

Ladies' Christmas
 Party

Why a Life Group 5

Missions Ministry

Young Jesus Kids' 6-

Activities 8

A New Year's Resolution?



Are you a New Year's resolution person? Some people set goals every year. Some half-heartedly set a goal or two, and some totally reject the idea, even calling it unbiblical. There's a saying that goal setters like (and non-goal setters hate) that says, "If you aim at nothing, you'll hit it every time." The most common New Year's resolutions people set are health related – eat healthier, exercise more, and lose weight. These are not bad goals; healthy bodies can better serve Christ! Unfortunately, statistics say only 9% of those who set New Year's resolutions keep them, 23% quit by the end of the first week, and most quit on the second Friday of the month, named "Quitter's Day" (www.insideoutmastery.com). The same article notes that 43% of the people who make New Year's resolutions expect to give up by February. The article looked at reasons people fail and gave these 3 tips, "Only set New Year's resolutions that are highly relevant, timely, and specific to you." Why do I tell you this?

In January many people set out to read through the Bible, and most fail to succeed. We put out a Bible reading plan every year and I could count on one hand the number who have told me they finished reading through the Bible the past year. Is it a worthy goal? I think so. You have permission to ask me how many times I've read through the Bible.

Is it okay to make a resolution, to set a goal? The apostles set goals. For example, "but taking leave of them and saying, 'I will return to you again if God wills,' he set sail from Ephesus." (Acts 18:21, *NASB*). We also see goals set in Roman 1:10; 1 Corinthians 4:19; Hebrews 6:3; and James 4:15; each time with the phrase "if the Lord wills/permits." The first step in setting any goal should be to submit it to the Lord, then be willing to allow Him to alter it.

Bible reading is a great goal, or New Year's resolution if you want to call it that. Some other possibilities could be to develop a stronger Christian life, build a spiritually stronger family, be a better witness for Christ at work or in the neighborhood, or use the gifts and talents God has given you to serve Christ. All of these are good goals but if you set out to achieve all of them, you would likely find yourself jettisoning some of them by February. If you wisely, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, choose one of these and pay attention to the tips below, you will likely find you are seeing success in the other areas as well!

Here are some tips to help you be successful in achieving your goal:

1) Be clear and realistic. For example, unless you are an avid reader, reading the whole Bible in a year will be overwhelming. It will take roughly 4,200 minutes. (70 hours; 81 minutes a week; or 11 ½ minutes a day). However, that's just reading through and not stopping to reread or think about what you're reading. A more realistic number is at least 15-20 minutes a day. Reading the entire New Testament is probably a more realistic goal your first year (18 hours; 1,080 minutes; just under 21 minutes a week, 3 minutes a day; which would more likely be 7-10 minutes a day).

2) Have a plan. Every year the church puts out a Bible reading plan. It always has an Old Testament and a New Testament reading for each day. All you need to do is follow the plan and you will reach your goal. A plan should include enough specifics to help you measure your progress. Determining the time and place ahead of time can be extremely helpful as well.

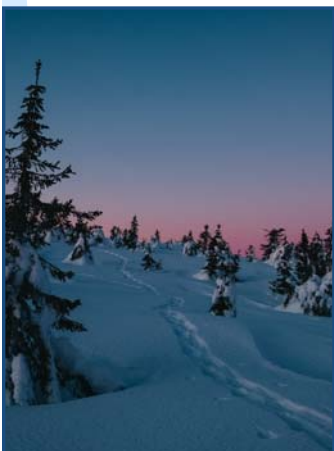
3) Establish your commitment. Ask yourself, "Is this goal important, more important than the other things that I will face and will vie for my attention?" And, "Why is this important for me?" Get this squared away first, and reestablish why this is important with regularity or your goal will fade into a wish.

4) Get support. Have someone you talk to regularly who will encourage you along the way. This is one of the reasons we encourage participation in a Life Group. It is a regular meeting in which people not only look at Scripture together but also share concerns, pray for, and encourage one another.

I would encourage you to think about making a spiritually stronger family a priority next year. Building families is at the core of our vision statement. Strong families make strong church families, which make strong communities. However, you will have to be more clear and more specific than, "build a spiritually strong family." Family devotions, regular church attendance, Christian service, or doing outreach together are some examples.

Do you want to make a New Year's Resolution? Make one with spiritual impact. Do you dislike New Year's Resolutions? Don't make one. Set a God-given goal for this year instead and start January 2nd.

Grace to You,
 Pastor Dan





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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1 New Year's Day!</p> <p>The Lord's Table Worship Services: The Gathering 9 am & Café 10:30 am</p> <p>No Sunday School, Pipeline, Ignite, or Fusion Iglesia Biblica—2 pm, S</p>	<p>2 (Office Closed)</p> <p>No Prayer Meeting</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Primetimers Games & Lunch—10 am-1 pm, NC/K</p> <p>Missions Meeting — 5:30 pm, LL #106</p>	<p>4</p> <p>No Sr. Life Group</p> <p>Awana: Trek/Journey—5:30 pm Cubbies-T&T—6:15 pm</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Prayer Meeting—6 pm, NC</p> <p>MBC Worship Prac- tice—7pm, S</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Ladies' Christmas Party—6:30-9 pm, NC</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Worship Practice—5:30 pm, S</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Women's Study—4 pm, LL #102</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Youth Group—6-7:30 pm, NC</p> <p>Open AA Mtg.—6 pm, 18 & 8th</p>
<p>8 Worship Services: The Gathering 9 am & Café 10:30 am</p> <p>Sunday School & Pipeline 9 am</p> <p>Mission Trip Info. Mtg. 10 & 11:30 AM, LL #100</p> <p>Baptism—2 pm, 18 & 8th</p> <p>Ignite—4-6 pm Fusion—6-8 pm</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Prayer Meeting—TBD pm, LL #102</p> <p>Joint Elder & Deacon Meeting—6:00 pm, NC Elder Mtg. following, LL #106 Deacon Mtg. following, NC</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Sr. Life Group—1 pm, NC</p> <p>Awana: Trek/Journey—5:30 pm Cubbies-T&T—6:15 pm</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Prayer Meeting—6 pm, NC</p> <p>MBC Worship Prac- tice—7pm, S</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Fusion at Districts</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Worship Practice—5:30 pm, S</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Fusion at Districts</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Youth Group—6-7:30 pm, NC</p>
<p>15 Worship Services: The Gathering 9 am & Café 10:30 am</p> <p>Sunday School & Pipeline 9 am</p> <p>Mission Trip Info. Mtg. 10 & 11:30 AM, LL #100</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica—2 pm, S</p> <p>No Ignite or Fusion Fusion returns home</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Prayer Meeting—5:30 pm, LL #102</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Sr. Life Group—1 pm, NC</p> <p>Awana: Trek/Journey—5:30 pm Cubbies-T&T—6:15 pm</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Prayer Meeting—6 pm, NC</p> <p>MBC Worship Prac- tice—7pm, S</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Worship Practice—5:30 pm, S</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Women's Study—4 pm, LL #102</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Youth Group—6-7:30 pm, NC</p>
<p>22 Worship Services: The Gathering 9 am & Café 10:30 am</p> <p>Sunday School & Pipeline 9 am</p> <p>Next Steps-Step 1— Noon, NC</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica—2 pm, S</p> <p>Ignite—4-6 pm Fusion—6-8 pm</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Prayer Meeting—5:30 pm, LL #102</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Sr. Life Group—1 pm, NC</p> <p>Awana: Trek/Journey—5:30 pm Cubbies-T&T—6:15 pm</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Prayer Meeting—6 pm, NC</p> <p>MBC Worship Prac- tice—7pm, S</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Worship Practice—5:30 pm, S</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Church in use for Funeral—8am-5pm, S/NC/K</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica Youth Group—6-7:30 pm, NC</p>
<p>29 Worship Services: The Gathering 9 am & Café 10:30 am</p> <p>Sunday School & Pipeline 9 am</p> <p>Iglesia Biblica—2 pm, S</p> <p>Ignite—4-6 pm Fusion—6-8 pm</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Prayer Meeting—5:30 pm, LL #102</p>	<p>31 (Deadline for Mission Trip Applications)</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f0ff;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>MBC Office Hours:</u> Monday—Thursday 8:00 AM—4:00 PM, & Fridays 8:00 AM—Noon</p> </div>			



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1 Dorothy McNett
Victor Paske
Bernie Roidt
2 Jeff Wunschel
Crystal Zimmerman
3 George Ohlrich
4 Ari Petersen
5 Shannon Ackerman
Cheryl Hartwig
6 Katelyn Schmitz
8 Hunter Hancock
Margie Johnson
9 CJ Erdmann
10 Kevin Geiwitz

11 Deb Meyer
Tim Wilcox
12 Maeve Baer
Ron Bernhagen
13 Tess Nafzger
14 Carson Montgomery
15 Cynthia Kitchell
Curt Wyttenbach
16 Shane Figi
18 Sarah Ragan
20 Julia Figi
Amy Haworth
Joram Hurlbert
Erich Krahenbuhl

21 Richard Thoman
Larry Young
23 Gene Schultz
24 Oscar Chiquito
Lynn Klitzke
Brinley Roidt
25 Angie Geiwitz
26 Deb Hendrickson
27 Avery Bartelt
28 Tyler Hartwig
29 Mike Brandenburg
Andrew Ragan
Griffin Ragan
31 Kay Bloom



6 Tom & Jill Skoumal
17 John & Nicole Bartelt
18 Kevin & Linda Samson
22 Oscar & Karla Chiquito
29 Duane & Crystal Zimmerman
30 Aleksandar & Viola Petroski





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Newsletter—January 2023



Prayer MINISTRY

Does prayer have a priority in your life? God has given all believers the privilege of prayer.

Recently I had a problem with a power window in our van. My wife put the window part of the way down and it wouldn't go back up. That made for a cold ride from Monroe to Brodhead. I decided to find the problem. Before I dove into fixing it, I asked God for help and wisdom. Some may ask if God is concerned about such small things. Yes, God wants us to pray about small things and big things. I did get the window to go up. Praise the Lord!

I would encourage you to pray for our government officials, 1 Timothy 2:1-2. That would include Federal, State, County, and local officials. Email and let each one know that you are praying for them. We write and email our officials about issues that we are concerned about which is a good thing to do. We should be concerned about praying for their spiritual condition. Remember Ephesians 6:12, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual forces of evil in heavenly places".

Also pray for your unsaved relatives, friends, and neighbors. I can't think of a better way to end 2022 and begin 2023. May God bless and guide your families in the new year.

Dan Keen, Prayer Ministry Leader



2023 Bible Reading Plan

Read the entire Bible (or just the New Testament) in one year while only reading five times a week. Five readings a week gives room to catch up or take a day off to focus on other Bible reading or spiritual disciplines and makes daily Bible reading practical and easy to do.

Plans available at the Welcome Center!



Next Steps at MBC

Next Steps are ways to learn more about and become involved at Monroe Bible Church.

Next Steps-Step 1(1s.)

"Our Commitments" - **Sunday, January 22nd** at Noon in the Nehemiah Center.

Lunch is provided. Learn what our vision is and how you can become a part of it.

Sign up for all Next Steps classes on our website, contact the office, or use the Chromebook at the Welcome Center.

YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR

Ladies Christmas PARTY

JANUARY 6th, 2023
Time: 6:30 pm - 9 pm

Where: Monroe Bible Church, 2613 8th Ave

RSVP to Marissa Hurlbert
horsehappy@gmail.com

Serving drinks, sweets, and light food



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Why a Life Group?

We get asked why we stress Life Groups at MBC. The word that probably best captures the reason is the word **relationships**. Our mission is to make disciples. A disciple is someone who follows Christ (i.e., has a genuine relationship with Him) and helps others (i.e., has a relationship with them) follow Christ. The Sunday morning worship service is designed to help us worship together, which is important for the disciple, but it's structure is not designed to help people have discipling relationships. The same can be said of Sunday School classes, Bible studies, and other church events. In our country people can hear multiple sermons (Christian radio, podcasts, etc.) in a week's time, but never ever get around to working out the application in their life. Our study guides follow the same passage as the sermon, rather than add another passage for the week, and focus on application. The small group setting, the discussion, the sharing, and the praying, help build the kinds of caring and encouraging relationships necessary for spiritual growth. Relationships have the built-in accountability that takes a person farther than gaining more Biblical knowledge.

Of course, some of us are more task than relationship oriented. Life Groups are a bigger step for us. And not all of our Life Groups are doing a great job at this, we're human. Different personalities and relationship chemistry affect effectiveness as well. But, bottom line, application is more important than personal comfort, or knowing more facts, and we see the ongoing relationship nature of the Life Group as the best structure for making disciples. So, if you are in a Life Group, strive to make it better, if not, give one a try!

Missions Ministry

Missions Ministry has ordered a copy of Deb Wyss's memoir which will be placed in the library once it arrives. Winter is a good time to catch up on some reading, so please take advantage of this opportunity for an honest look at what missionary life is like in a difficult place and culture.

Dates have been set for our 2023 Guatemala Mission Trip. We will serve with Oscar and Karla Chiquito from June 10th to the 17th. Oscar determines each year what the greatest needs are and how we can be of the most service. His main focus this year is the Retreat and Pastors' Training Center in Sumpango. Although he doesn't know at what stage the building project will be when we arrive, he currently thinks we may help with painting, landscaping, and possibly plumbing, electrical, and other construction projects. Later each day the team will either help a local church host VBS or do home visits with a local pastor. Teams have done both activities in the past and felt they were blessed as much as those they served. Previous mission trip participants can tell you what a joy it is to work alongside Oscar and his family. If you are interested in this opportunity, please plan to attend one of the informational meetings in January. Talk to some who have gone to Guatemala in the past, and most of all pray as to whether God is asking you to go this year. Oscar is eager to have our church resume mission trips to Guatemala.

Please attend **one** of the informational meetings. Choose either Sunday, after either worship service.

4 Options: Sunday, January 8th or 15th, after each of the worship services (at approximately 10:00 and 11:30 AM).

Meet in the lower level room #100 (at the base of the stairs).

Crystal Zimmerman, Missions Ministry Leader



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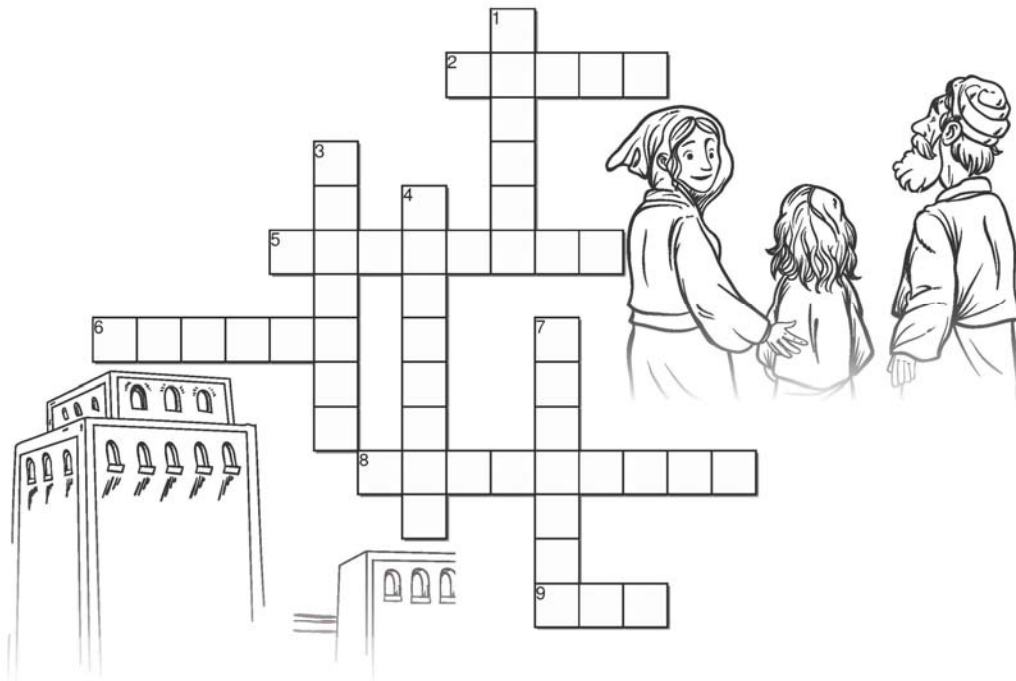
Jesus is revealed as the Son of God. Many clues appear in Scripture that help to identify Jesus as the Messiah.

Read Luke 2:39-52

1. In this story: Jesus said to Mary, "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's House?" Mary referred to Joseph as Jesus's father, and Jesus reveals that His father is God almighty.

2. In the Old Testament: There are many, but a few examples include: He would be a descendant of King David (Jeremiah 23:5); He would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2); He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14); He would perform many miracles (Isaiah 35:5-6); and He would be betrayed by a friend, and the money would be used to purchase Potter's Field (Zech. 11:13).

3. From His birth: The angel Gabriel told Mary her son would be called "the Son of the Most High" (Luke 1:32); Elizabeth testified that the child Mary was expecting was "the great Redeemer" (Luke 1:43); the angels announced that Jesus was "Christ the Lord" (meaning "God the Messiah"); Simeon, a righteous and devout man, exclaimed, "for my eyes have seen your salvation ...;" and the prophetess Anna spoke of the baby Jesus as the "redemption of Israel."



Across

2. And Mary treasured all these things in her _____.
5. Mary, Joseph, and young Jesus left Jerusalem and headed to what town?
6. How old was Jesus when he made the trip to Passover in this story?
8. Where was the Passover celebration located?
9. Jesus responds to Mary, "Where else would I be but in my Father's house." Which father is Jesus referring to?

Down

1. Where did Mary and Joseph finally find Jesus?
3. Passover is a celebration of God delivering Israel, from the _____ of Egypt.
4. What is the name of the feast (festival) that Mary, Joseph, and young Jesus travel to in this story?
7. Mary was distraught when she realized young Jesus was _____.



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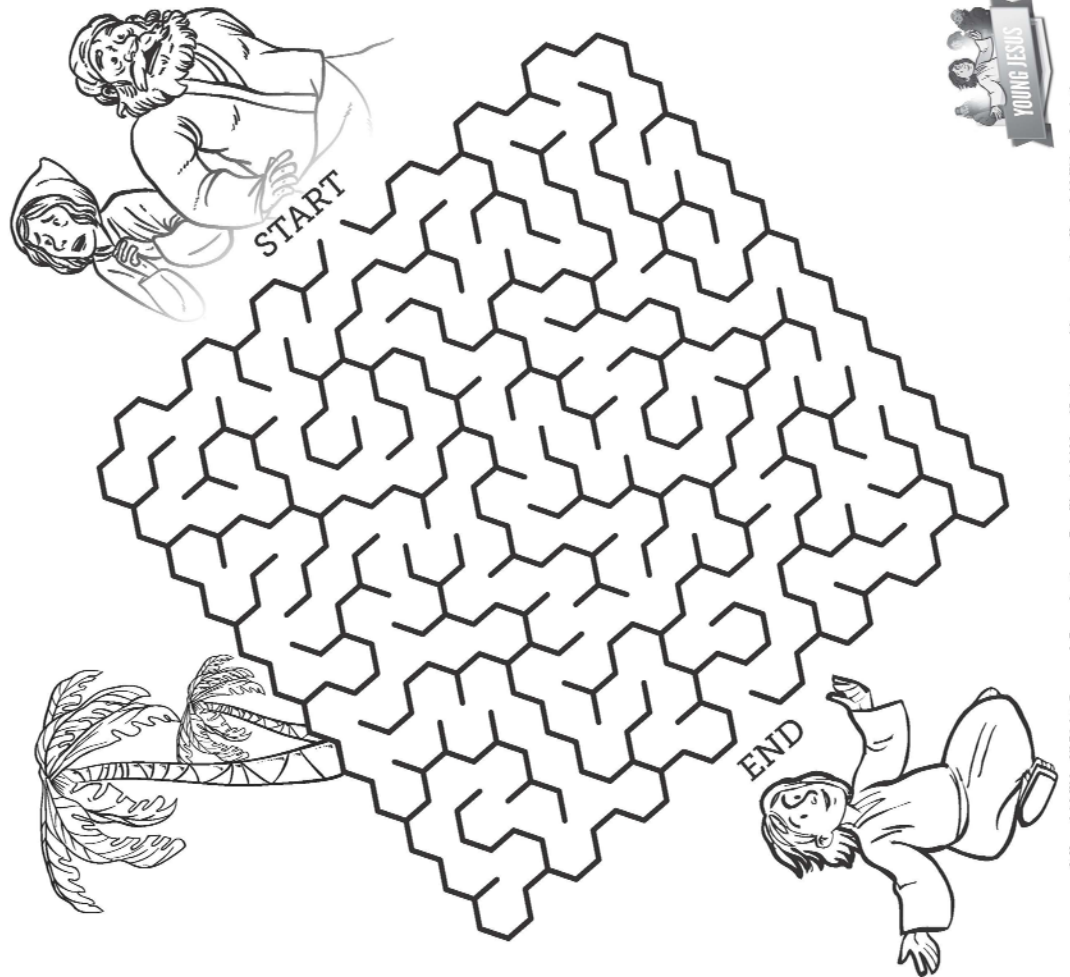


Jesus: The Messiah, the Son of the living God. He emptied himself of His divine rights and assumed humanity. In childhood, he showed obedience to God through obedience to Joseph and Mary. As he matured, he began to transition to exclusive obedience to His Father in Heaven and occupied his time with pursuing God's will and calling.

Mary and Joseph: The earthly parents of Jesus. They had a great love for their son and raised Him in a manner pleasing to God. Mary was told that Jesus would be heir to the throne of King David and would be the Savior of the world, but that this calling, combined with her devotion, would produce a conflict that would one day cause her grief. The anxiety and pain of searching for her missing son would not compare to the sorrow she would one day endure when she would be a witness to her beloved son's crucifixion.

YOUNG JESUS

Help Mary and Joseph search for young Jesus





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The young Jesus grew in wisdom and in favor with God and man. His earthly parents were amazed by Him; His heavenly Father was well-pleased with Him; and His deep devotion to God and to His law made him stand out from the rest. Little by little, the Messiah, the Savior of the world, was being revealed, and His ultimate act of obedience to God would be our deliverance.

Spot 8 differences between the two pictures, then Color the Pictures

